

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Status of Claims

Claims 25-39 stand withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1-24 are pending in this application. Claims 1-24 have been rejected.

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the tampon has an insertion end and an opposite withdrawal end and that the withdrawal end has a liquid-resistant zone. Support for this amendment can be found in original Claim 16. No new matter has been added with this amendment.

Rejections

Claims 1-5, 7-20 and 22-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brown, Jr., U.S. Pat. No. 5,185,010 (“Brown”), in view of Li et al., U.S. Pat. Appln. Publication No. 2002/0169429 (“Li”). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The present invention as recited in claim 1 relates to a tampon having improved leakage protection. The tampon has a compressed absorbent structure having an insertion end and an opposite withdrawal end having a liquid-resistant zone. The structure includes an absorbent material having a length, a width defined from a first edge corresponding to the introduction end of the tampon to a second edge corresponding to the withdrawal end of the tampon, and a thickness. The structure also includes an overwrap material disposed on the absorbent material. The overwrap material has a length greater than the length of the absorbent material. The overwrap material has a width generally corresponding to the width of the absorbent material and comprises a liquid-permeable zone and a liquid-resistant zone. The liquid-resistant zone of the overwrap material forms a fold over the second edge of the absorbent material, and the second edge corresponds to the withdrawal end of the tampon. This liquid-resistant zone provides improved leakage protection.

Brown and Li are described in the previous response. However, Applicants respectfully point out that neither reference relates to tampons having improved leakage protection. There is no teaching or suggestion in the references to combine their teaching. Even if there was a reason to combine the references, there is no motivation, teaching, or suggestion to arrange liquid-pervious and liquid-resistant zones to provide a tampon having improved leakage protection. Failing this motivation, teaching, and/or suggestion, the Office's rejection fails to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness of the presently pending claims. Reconsideration of this rejection is earnestly solicited.

Claims 6 and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brown in view of Li as applied to claims 1, 4, 16 and 19, and in further view of Olson et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,916,205, ("Olson"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Applicants respectfully submit that the additional reference of Olson fails to supply the missing motivation, teaching, and/or suggestion to provide the presently claimed tampon having improved leakage protection. Reconsideration of this rejection is earnestly solicited.

Applicants believe that the foregoing presents a full and complete response to the outstanding Office Action. Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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